
Course Syllabus - History 600

Corporations in American History / Prof. Dunlavy

Course mechanics

Course name

Advanced Seminar in History: Corporations in American History

Course number

448-600-002

Day/time/location

Thursdays, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 5255 Mosse Humanities Building, 455 North Park St.

Pre-requisites

Instructor authorization is required. History majors must take one History 600 seminar to fulfill the requirements of the major. While registration in this course is not limited to History majors, priority will be given to majors as well as to students who have taken courses that provide good background for the history of American corporations (e.g., History 247, History 465-466).

Prof. Dunlavy's office hours

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., 5109 Mosse Humanities Building; or by appointment: call 263-1854 or email cdunlavy@wisc.edu.

Course description

Capstone seminar

This seminar offers the History major a "capstone" experience with hands-on research -- that is, an experience designed to put the finishing touches on your major. Over the course of the semester you will produce a 20- to 25-page paper that is **based on primary sources** and makes **an original contribution** to historical knowledge. Because of its intensive nature, you should plan to make this seminar the focal point of your semester and to devote lots of time to it. If the research topic that you develop is intellectually gripping and challenging, it will be a wonderful experience.

Your research topic

Corporations of all kinds -- charitable (benevolent), educational, and for-profit (business) -- have been an increasingly prominent feature of American history since the Revolution. Yet many aspects of their history remain unexplored. This seminar offers you an opportunity to contribute to historical knowledge about corporations.

You may focus your research on any period in American history and on any aspect of the history of corporations -- social, political, economic. We will do a small amount of reading in common on the history of corporations, but mostly you will read primary and secondary sources that you have selected yourself to illuminate your own research topic. **Fair warning:** developing a viable and interesting research topic is often the most difficult, time-consuming part of the research process!

Rhythm of the semester

During the first few weeks of the semester, we will develop a common foundation of knowledge of several kinds -- about the history of corporations, about the nuts-and-bolts of the research process, and about the wealth of research materials available on campus and on the web.

As you begin to firm up your paper topics, the seminar will switch modes and begin to function like a workshop in which each student presents an aspect of her/his research and learns to critique the other students' work.

Course materials

For full details on required and recommended course materials as well as bibliographic leads for your research, go to the Historian's Toolkit.

Listed here are the **required** reading materials for this course. The books may be purchased at the University Bookstore and are available on reserve at College Library. The articles or book excerpts will be available on electronic reserves.

On the history of the corporation

Lipartito, Kenneth, and David B. Sicilia, eds. *Constructing Corporate America: History, Politics, Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Readings on electronic reserve (see Semester Schedule).

On the research/writing process

Marius, Richard, and Melvin E. Page. *A Short Guide to Writing about History*. 4th ed. New York: Longman, 2002.

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Browne, M. Neil, and Stuart M. Keeley. *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking*. 7th ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2004.

Strunk, William, Jr., and E. G. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York: Longman, 2000.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th ed., revised by John Grossman and Alice Bennett. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Course Requirements

Participation

The success of this seminar -- and its value to you -- depends critically on your participation. Also, twenty-five percent of your course grade will be based on your participation in seminar.

Participation is comprised of several elements.

1. **Attendance:** This is vital, although it is not sufficient for a good grade (faithful attendance alone will earn you a "C").
2. **Preparation:** In weeks when we have assigned readings, be sure to read them closely and critically. Come to seminar with the questions the readings raise in your mind. If you are having trouble generating questions, then you need to learn to read more actively (rather than passively). For help, turn to Browne and Keeley's *Asking the Right Questions* (see above). Once we shift into workshop mode, bring to the weekly seminar the issues and questions that crop up each week in the course of your own research.
3. **Engaged discussion:** Active and informed discussion of the readings and your own or other students' research problems will enhance the value of the seminar for all concerned. You can make a difference! -- and it certainly matters for your semester grade.

Written Work

As the Semester Schedule makes clear, you will produce a series of written assignments in the process of researching and writing your paper. These are:

- one-paragraph statement of research topic, Sept. 13-14
- brief statement of research topic with preliminary bibliography of secondary and primary sources, Oct. 5
- two-page statement of research topic with detailed bibliography, Oct. 12
- detailed outline with annotated bibliography, Oct. 26
- polished draft of your paper, Nov. 18
- final paper, Dec. 21

Our Learn@UW site

This class has a password-secured Learn@UW site, which you can reach through your UW portal at <http://my.wisc.edu> or directly at <https://uwmad.courses.wisc.edu>. Use your UW NetID and password to log on.

On the site for History 600, you will find a link to this syllabus and a calendar of course events. As they become available, I will also post instructions for your various writing assignments. You might also want to try out the chat tool or launch a discussion thread. At any time during the semester, feel free to suggest ways that we might use Learn@UW to facilitate learning in this class.

Your grades will also be available on the Learn@UW site and they will be submitted electronically to the Registrar at the end of the semester. Check them periodically to ensure that what I have recorded matches your

Course Policies

Absence from Seminar

Faithful attendance is absolutely critical to the success of the seminar. No "ifs," "ands," or "buts" -- be there. If an emergency prevents you from attending, be sure to let me know as soon as possible.

Late Assignments

One full letter grade will be deducted for each day that an assignment is late.

Grading

Your grade for this course will be based on your written work as well as on your participation in the seminar meetings.

Participation accounts for 25% of your seminar grade. To do well, attend seminar faithfully, come well prepared, and display active engagement with your own and other students' research projects. I will periodically let you know your "participation-to-date" grade.

The remaining 75% will be divided among the following assignments:

- Two-page statement of research question plus bibliography (due Oct. 12) - 10%
- Detailed outline with annotated bibliography (Oct. 28) - 15%
- Final paper (due Dec. 21) - 50%

Grades will be assigned according to the standard UW format (A, AB, B, BC, C, D, F), except that I will also use pluses and minuses to give you more nuanced feedback during the semester. At the end of the semester, however, final grades must be reported without pluses and minuses. Note that an overall average grade with a "plus" (e.g., B+) will not translate into a higher grade -- that is, it will be reported as a B. However, a "minus" grade (e.g., AB-) will not result in a lower grade; it will be reported as an AB.

Semester Schedule - History 600 / F04

Corporations in American History / Prof. Dunlavy

Sept. 2 (R) - Introductions, course mechanics

Recommended reading, if you haven't taken History 247: Blackford and Kerr, *Business Enterprise in American History* (stocked at UBS for History 247)

Sept. 9 (R) - Overview of historical writing and the research process

Read: Richard Marius and Melvin E. Page, *A Short Guide to Writing about History*, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 2002). Read chapters 1-4.

Read: Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). Browse through the entire book and read chapters 1-6 closely.

Research: find secondary sources that might answer the research questions that interest you

In seminar - we will do quick tours of Memorial Library and the Historical Society.

Sept. 16 (R) - No seminar; individual meetings with Prof. D. on Monday, **Sept. 13**, and Tuesday, **Sept. 14**.

Bring to your meeting with Prof. D.: A completed form detailing your preliminary ideas about your research topic and your preparation for it in other history courses. Use this opportunity to show me the best writing that you are able to produce.

Research: search for and evaluate secondary sources that address your tentative research question

Sept. 23 (R) - On the history of American (business) corporations, part I

Read: Kenneth Lipartito and David B. Sicilia, eds., *Constructing Corporate America: History, Politics, Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Read in its entirety, focusing closely on the chapters that most interest you and are most relevant for your research topic.

Research: continue evaluating secondary sources that address the research question that interests you; and begin to search for relevant primary sources

In seminar - come prepared to speak for about three minutes on your research project -- how has your topic shaped up, why should it interest scholars, and what secondary and primary sources do you expect to use. Needless to say, be succinct!

Sept. 30 (R) - On the history of American (business) corporations, part II

Read:

- Williston, Samuel. "The History of the Law of Business Corporations Before 1800." In *Select Essays in Anglo-American Legal History*, vol. 3. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1909. Pp. 195-235.
- Davis, Joseph Stancliffe. *Essays in the Earlier History of American Corporations, No. IV, Eighteenth Century Business Corporations in the United States*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1917. Pp. 3-33, 291-330.
- Handlin, Oscar, and Mary F. Handlin. "Origins of the American Business Corporation." *Journal of Economic History* 5:1 (May 1945): 1-23.
- Maier, Pauline. "The Revolutionary Origins of the American Corporation." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 50:1 (January 1993): 51-84.
- Evans, George Heberton, Jr. *Business Incorporations in the United States, 1800-1943*. New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1948. Pp. 10-35.
- Lamoreaux, Naomi. *The Great Merger Movement in American Business, 1895-1904*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. Pp. 1-12.
- Smith, Geroge David, and Davis Dyer. "The Rise and Transformation of the American Corporation." In *The American Corporation Today*. Edited by Carl Kaysen. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. Pp. 28-73.

Research: search diligently for relevant primary sources; find and use secondary sources as needed.

Oct. 7 (R) - Thinking critically

Due on Tuesday, Oct. 5 (by noon; send by email): Brief statement of research question with preliminary bibliography of your most promising secondary sources (approx. five) and a description of possible primary sources.

Read:

- Finish Marius and Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*;

- Finish Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*;
- Read Browne and Keeley, *Asking the Right Questions* (if you haven't done so already).

Read and evaluate: Everyone else's statement of research topic and likely sources (on our Learn@UW site).

Research: delve deeply into primary sources.

Oct. 14 (R) - The nuts and bolts of research papers

Due on Tuesday, Oct. 12 (by noon; send by email): Two-page statement of your research question with detailed bibliography of secondary and primary sources (10% of your grade).

Read:

- Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*
- Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*

Read and evaluate: Everyone else's two-page statement of research topic and bibliography (on our Learn@UW site).

Oct. 21 (R) - No seminar; individual meetings with Prof. D. on Wednesday, Oct. 20, and Thursday, Oct. 21

Oct. 28 (R) - Workshop / collective problem-solving

Due on Tuesday, Oct. 26 (by noon, send by email): **detailed outline** of your paper **with an annotated bibliography** of secondary and primary sources (15% of your grade)

Read and evaluate: Everyone else's outline and bibliography (on our Learn@UW site).

Nov. 4 (R) - Workshop / collective problem-solving

Nov. 11 (R) - Workshop / collective problem-solving

Nov. 18 (R) - Workshop / collective problem-solving. **A polished draft of your paper is due in seminar today!**

Nov. 25 (R) - No seminar (Thanksgiving) - revise and expand your paper draft

Dec. 2 (R) - Workshop presentations

Dec. 9 (R) - Workshop presentations

Dec. 21 (T) - **Final papers** (50% of your grad) **due by 12:00 p.m.**
